

REMARKS

Fees for this response

As the number of claims is reduced by this amendment, no additional claims fee is believed to be required with this response. The fee for a two-month extension of time accompanies this amendment.

Regarding the §102 and §103 rejections

Claims 1-3 and 10-12 are subject to art rejections. These rejections have been rendered moot by the cancellation of those claims.

Regarding claims 4-9

The office action states that these claims are allowable if written in independent form, but are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

It appears that in formulating this objection the examiner inadvertently overlooked the amendment to claim 4 that was made in Response A, filed 30 June 2003. Claim 4 was placed into independent form in that amendment. (This is acknowledged at the top of page 2 of the office action.) Claims 5-9 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 4. It is believed that claims 4-9 are allowable in their current condition, as they do not depend from any rejected base claim.

Regarding claims 13-18

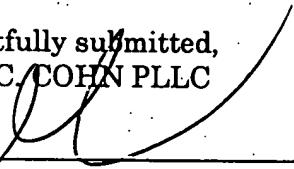
Claims 13-18 were indicated as being allowed in the previous office action.

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Conclusion

All claims remaining in the application have been indicated as being allowed (13-18) or allowable (4-9). As all outstanding issues are believed to have been resolved, a timely notice of allowance is respectfully requested. The undersigned is available by telephone if a call would advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,
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